English summaries

Anita Norlund: Suggestopedia as a language didactic method in adult education – a critical text analysis

The language learning method *suggestopedia* (also called *accelerated/accelerative learning*) appears to have had a revival in Sweden. The method was developed by the Bulgarian psychotherapist, Lozanov, in the 70's and relies on ideas such as holism, suggestion and multi-sensory learning. Roleplays and games are key elements. Previous research has primarily highlighted the advantages of this method. This article, instead, takes a derogatory stance and thus, the aim of this article is to critically shed light on 1) how promotors of the suggestopedia method view problems that arise in interaction with adults from foreign countries and 2) how, according to the same promotors, these problems should be addressed. This is done through a critical discourse analysis of six strategically selected texts which all endorse suggestopedia as a fruitful method and all of which connect to projects funded by *The European Social Fund*. Three texts are from the fund itself and the other three texts provide real-time examples of how the method is applied. We/I will demonstrate that they all rely on certain semiotic resources.

The analysis was conducted in five stages in which the first two stages include a linguistic transitivity analysis conducted within a framework of discourse analysis. This includes approaches drawn from the theory of *systemic-functional linguistics* involving such concepts as *first* and *second actors*, *processes, circumstances, modality* etc. First of all, what is identified is how the problem of learning is constructed by the actors involved in the projects. It shows that adults from foreign countries are placed within a *deficiency discourse* where their unhealth and lack of skills are emphasized. As far as teaching methods are concerned, ordinary teaching methods are blamed within a '*far too traditional*'-*discourse*. In order to stress the problematic features, certain metaphors are used. Second, what is identified are which appropriate measures are suggested to be taken in order to address the problem. It is revealed that the solution suggested is framed by a *playful anti-traditionality discourse*, partly using a commercial, promising rhetoric. It also revealed that implemented activities

are weakly framed from a language teaching perspective. The third step unpacks the network of practices in which the funder is a nodal actor and also answers the question of whether the network needs the constructed problem. It also brings to light a re-organisation of attitudes to research and a re-organisation of relations between the funder and research. Next, inconsistencies and gaps emerging from the analysis are reported. In particular, counter-voices from researchers who have demonstrated that several of the aspects that characterize the suggestopedia as a method are in fact neuromyths; for example, the idea of addressing the students' individual learning styles or the idea of turning to music by Mozart to enhance learning. Other critical points seem to be ignored too. For example, the fact that, as previously research confirms, not everyone is comfortable with role-playing. Finally, potential methodological problems connected to the conducted analysis are reported. I conclude by stating that there are critical aspects to consider concerning both the construction of the migrants and the didactical methodology of suggestopedia.

Jenny Rosén, Boglárka Straszer and Åsa Wedin: Use of linguistic resources in Study Guidance in the Mother Tongue

This article focuses on questions of equality and social justice in the Swedish compulsory school, through an analysis of Study Guidance in the Mother Tongue (SGMT) with a focus on pedagogical, linguistic and cultural aspects. SGMT is a form of support that constitutes a temporal, pedagogic practice, which according to the Swedish School Ordinance aims to use what is referred to as the student's mother tongue for subject learning. The study is theoretically grounded in Bhabha's concept *third space* and in a dynamic view of multilingualism through the concept of *translanguaging*. The study builds on interviews with 19 SGMT assistants, and participant observations from SGMT practices from fives schools in three municipalities.

   Through the interviews with the SGMT assistants it became visible how they use and adapt their linguistic resources in relation to the students, while simultaneously striving to direct students toward using standard Swedish norms. It also became clear that some assistants were used as extra pedagogical resources in the schools, by being assigned to some students that they did not share a common language with. This may be interpreted as lack of social inclusion and equivalent education, since the assistants were imposed to excessive responsibility for these students, even though they were not educated teachers. It was also made visible that subject knowledge is not only linguistically but also culturally embedded and that epistemological issues were included in the assistants' tasks. Thus the complexity in the pedagogic,

linguistic and cultural practices that constitute SGMT was revealed. Furthermore the results show that SGMT may not only be perceived as a support through the student's mother tongue, as may be understood through official documents, but rather as a translanguaging practice, beyond linguistic and cultural borders.

This strengthens the understanding of SGMT as a third space, which implies not only a third space between two cultures, two languages, two epistemological and two ontological perspectives, but a complex diversity. At the same time, the study accentuates the weak role that SGMT assistants have been fund to have in earlier research. One result of this weak position is an insufficient collaboration with class and subject teachers, as well as tendencies to adapt to Swedish norms without opposition, as was fund in this study.

The low status of SGMT assistants that have been observed may result in the loss of essential information and knowledge on the part of all students and the school. This knowledge could have the potential to widen perspectives and stimulate their learning and critical thinking. For a school aiming at equality and social justice, it appears necessary to strengthen the position of the SGMT assistants as well as the co-operation with class and subject teachers.

Layal Kasselias Wiltgren: Polite Exclusion: Peer Exclusion of High-performing Immigrant Youth in a School Setting

Integration problems are often explained in terms of segregation: students with immigrant backgrounds are frequently associated with so-called ethnically segregated residential areas and stigmatized, low-performing, suburban schools where they have no opportunity to meet Swedish peers. This is provided as the explanation for their low chances of integration in the short and long term, whether in a school setting or in general society. In contrast, this study investigates high performing students attending a high-performing program at a well-reputed upper secondary school. While formally valued and included, by both the school, and the faculty, they express feelings of social exclusion by their Swedish peers. This exclusion is expressed in subtle, almost intangible ways, referred to as microaggressions. Students with migrant backgrounds are not termed with derogatory epitaphs, teased, or verbally challenged. Instead, the exclusion is expressed in tiny, next to imperceptible, ways in everyday interactions.

The students with immigrant backgrounds in question explain these acts of exclusion in terms of ethnicity and ethnic background. They describe access to and acceptance by the Swedish peer group as requiring a perceived sameness to this group. This is partly confirmed by students with Swedish

backgrounds, who state that they chose friends based on sameness. This leads to a Catch-22: in order to be included one has to possess a sameness. But in order to acquire the sameness, students need to be included. Thus they remain subtly excluded.

This type of subtle exclusion is hard to challenge because it is covert, and its covertness reduces the affected students' capabilities in resisting and opposing it. The peers termed as Swedes do reply when spoken to, but do so in a sharp or abrupt manner. Thus there is little concrete action to object to. The teachers, who claim that the class is very integrated and accepting, do not appear to regard this exclusion as involuntary and do not mark it in terms of ethnicity. Thus the affected students have limited options for objection and resistance, and even though the teachers, when interviewed, state that they have observed the segregation present in the classroom, they do not attempt to mediate it due to the fact that there is no visible resistance to it. Instead, they explain it in terms of unfortunate circumstances. As nobody acts or objects, the possibilities of change are faint.

Resistance carries a double risk for the affected students, as in resisting, they might be seen as the source of the problem. This as their resistance would cast a negative shadow over peers who have not trespassed formally or socially. This allows the exclusions to continue unchallenged.

Inclusion is not a matter of either/or. As this study shows, inclusion can very well coexist with exclusion, and formal inclusion is by no means a guarantee of social inclusion. Inclusion cannot be reduced to the physical, in terms of the placement of students from different backgrounds beneath a common roof.

Jörgen From, Fanny Pettersson and Gerd Pettersson: Remote teaching – a key element in the digitalization of school

Digitalization in Swedish schools can be traced back to discussions in the 1960s concerning the computer's future role in the classroom. The advancement of digitization evolved at a national level during the 1980s, with political requirements and state-funded digitization initiatives aimed at increasing integration and the use of digital technology in school (see Jedeskog, 2005; Perselli, 2015; Perrotta & Evans, 2013; Tallvid; 2015). Albeit national initiatives have shown opportunities to produce technical and digital infrastructures over the years, the impact on pedagogical and organizational development seems to have occurred to a lesser extent (Hyllén, 2001; Jedeskog, 2005; Håkansson-Lindqvist, 2015). Reasons and explanations have been related to a lack of educational objects, top-down driven initiatives with limited connection to teachers' practice and the absence of shared goals and

visions in school organizations (Hyllén, 2001; Jedeskog, 2005; Håkansson-Lindqvist, 2015).

Concerning increased digitalization in school, there are examples on how organizational and educational needs force sustainable and in-depth digitization in school. Remote teaching is one example. As evident in this study, access to technologies provides an important prerequisite for remote education (see also Millet, 2012); however, it does not constitute a stand-alone tool, initiative or solution. Instead, the pursuit of accessible, high-quality and equivalent teaching regardless of teachers' and pupils' geographical location serves as an important object, thus giving educational value to digitalization and access to technologies (Pettersson, 2009). In this paper, we will argue that remote teaching can be understood as a central and strategic component for digitalization in school. As a point of departure for this argument, we present a review of previous and ongoing digitization initiatives in Swedish primary and secondary school, followed by a historical description of the development of remote teaching in Sweden. As a third stimuli for discussion, we present an empirical case providing teachers' experiences from and perspectives on their own development of remote teaching in Swedish schools. The case includes data from 14 teachers who were followed during one school year (2016/2017). Data include surveys and learning reflections written by the teachers every second week.

Based on previous research and the empirical case, we exemplify how the interaction between explicit educational needs in schools and the possibilities of digitization can lead to in-depth, sustainable and school-wide changes in digital, educational and school organizational practice (see also Häll, Hällgren & Söderström 2007; Millet, 2012: Pettersson, 2018b; Pettersson & From, 2018: Xiong, Ge, Wang, & Wang, 2016). According to the study, remote teaching seems to both presume and produce examples of digital, pedagogical and organizational development work driven by explicit educational needs or objects (Pettersson & From, 2018; Pettersson & Olofsson, 2019).

Therefore, a reasonable conclusion is that digitization in school is an educational rather than a technical issue. Seen from this perspective, contextual and organizational conditions become essential for supporting educational development in a digitalized context. An organizational approach might be more productive and provide possibilities to avoid so-called blame games where the school's actors, often teachers, are indicated as the cause for limited digital and educational development (Convery, 2009; Pettersson, 2018a). The above-described needs and challenges, however, impose requirements on school organization and leaders to develop competencies in order to lead this strategic and operational development work (compare Håkansson-Lindqvist & Pettersson, 2019).

Linnéa Holmberg and Eva Kane: Useful play: play as rhetorical resource in Swedish school-age educare research

Play has long been, and still is, a central aspect of the offerings of school-age educare. Children's play is in this context sacrosanct and not easily criticized. The aim of the article is to explore how Swedish research about school-age educare deal with the concept of play, more specifically how discursive constructions of play are produced and organized.

In the governing documents that regulates and defines the role of school-age educare the discourse about play is present but vague. School-age educare has its own chapter in the present national curricula for compulsory school (Skolverket, 2018). In this chapter words such as development and learning takes center stage while play shows up later in the text. Play is presented as one medium, among others, to ensure development and learning. In the commentary to the chapter (Skolverket, 2016) play is described as delivering the following competences and abilities: fantasy, ability to develop relationships, co-operation, communication, physical literacy, concentration, perseverance (among others). As an enabler for something else play is limitless. Play for its own sake does not though seem as enough. Play without a discursive link to some sort of knowledge production does, in this context, not seem adequate or appropriate. Play need to be planned by staff as part of school-age educare and the raison d´être for child-initiated play is that it can be allowed as long as staff can support or develop it. The governing documents state that play should be consciously worked with as well as be considered a resource. We conclude that play for its own sake, in educational policy, is not desirable or justified, yet it is described as a useful tool to achieve different things, mainly development and learning. In this way, children's play becomes valid and legitimized.

Through a discourse analysis, present day's research about Swedish school-age educare is explored with a focus on how it deals with the play concept. The aim is not to establish a new 'truth' about play in school-age educare but instead to show that what is taken-for-granted today is only one version of many possible (Olsson, Petersson & Krejsler, 2015). We base our theoretical and methodological approach on discursive psychology, which focuses on how people produce versions of reality through language use (Potter, 1996). The empirical material used is the 25 peer-reviewed articles we could find, published between 2010 and 2017, that focused primarily on Swedish school-age educare.

The analysis shows how research becomes a co-contributor to the production of an official version of school-age educare by introducing five common themes that sometimes overlap. Firstly, the discourse about what type of play is possible in school-age educare, centers around the idea that play is always conditioned by staff. They enable it, supervise it and lastly, from

their own perspective, improve it. Then, four different ways of giving school-age educare credibility as a relevant social institution was distinguished:

- Play legitimizes school-age educare as a democratic activity by presenting play as something that is initiated by children themselves. Most children want to play and letting them do so fulfills central parts of the task of school-age educare. Play as a rhetorical resource can legitimize school-age educare as democratic because play is described as a democratic way of working, as a democratic principle and as a democratic process.
- Play legitimizes school-age educare as a professional activity since staff take responsibility for children's play and ensures its content is in line with educational policy. Play as a rhetorical resource can legitimize school-age educare as professional since staff can distinguish what is desirable play, they can support children in the development of 'good' play and they are professional when they link play with the curriculum and the learning outcomes.
- Play legitimizes care as an elevated ideal. Care can be legitimized in school-age educare through using play as a rhetorical resource to upgrade it compared to development and learning. Play is also used to defend traditional approaches in the light of new educational policies and lastly it is used to highlight relationship building and the importance of groups, which is a unique feature of school-age educare in the educational system.
- Play legitimizes learning as an elevated ideal. Play is assumed to generate children's learning without staff having to direct it. Play as a rhetorical resource can legitimize learning as an elevated ideal because everything can be learnt through play, everything that is learnt through play is good and learning through play does not demand staff interventions.

The conclusion is that scientific use of the play concept reproduces the earlier empirical research findings about how the concept is used in school-age educare practice, without problematizing this. In this reproduction, the concept is used as a rhetorical resource to describe different elements of the practice in ways that suits traditional school-age educare ideals as well as present educational policy ideas. This shows the versatile function of the play concept as a tool to legitimize other aspects such as learning and professionalism. In this way, this useful concept makes it possible to provide scientific descriptions of school-age educare as the institution that educational

policies are looking for today. Play is therefore a universal rhetorical solution for solving all kinds of problems.

Henrik Lindqvist, Rickard Östergren and Lotta Holme: Teacher Assistants in School: A review of research

The number of teacher assistants [*elevassistent* in Swedish] has escalated in Sweden and other countries over the past few years. Teacher assistants work primarily with students in need of special support, and are listed as an option for special support by Swedish school authorities. Even so, there are no guidelines for how and with what teacher assistants should work. There has been previous alarm connected to the teacher assistant role, but evidence from research emphasise that teaching using a manual can be successfully carried out by teacher assistants. However, there is scarce evidence that teacher assistants in an independent, free work role do have a positive impact on schoolwork, or as support for students in need of special support. The aim of this study is to investigate the role of teacher assistants in schools through reviewing scientific publications about teacher assistants and support staff in schools. Our aim was to investigate if there is any research that describe teacher assistants' work with students in need of special support, with the complete student population of a classroom, or for teachers, working as a complementary resource in the classroom. Through searching scientific databases, 16 publications were selected from a total sample of 564 publications. Searches made with Swedish words rendered in no publications. We screened the total sample and selected 35 publications for further review, and the narrowed sample matching our criteria for inclusion consists of 16 publications.

We coded the articles and conducted a thematic analysis from the results of the studies. The result from the thematic analyses generated four themes that describe teacher assistant with a non-directed, free work role in the classroom. The teacher assistants' free role leads to teachers' assistants being (1) primary educator for students in need of special support, (2) experts about students in need of special support, (3) in a support role for teachers and (4) a role connected primarily to maintaining a selected student's attention on tasks.

Being a primary educator for students in need of special support involves making educational task decisions connected to instructions or, separating the student in special needs from the classroom. From this practice, teaching assistants are supposed to be primary educator in a lot of different subjects in school, without formal training, guidelines or education for the task. In having a role as an expert on students in special needs, the decision-making about

students in need of special support is viewed as appropriate, and as a basis for inclusive education. Even so, teacher assistants are seen among teachers as experts, and as such, teacher assistants might hinder contact between the teacher and a specific student. In having a support role of the teacher, teacher assistants are primarily to be guided by the teacher, and through this more formalised work role, teacher assistants seem to be able to reduce classroom disorder and positively impact the working environment in classrooms. As a role maintaining attention on a school task for a specific student, research describe interactional strategies that teacher assistants lack, due to not being educated to teach. The role of teacher assistant maintaining attention during lessons might lead to more time on task, but not more learning since the tasks might be lacking the instructional competence to develop competencies.

The themes are discussed as potential pitfalls and opportunities having access to teacher assistants from a relational special education perspective. The aggregated research emphasizes alarm with having teacher assistants as a primary educator, but is still the most common practice when using teacher assistants in a free role.